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ABOUT
step into health is a bimonthly magazine developed by the Healthy Lifestyle Program at Aspetar - Member of Aspire Zone Foundation. Bringing you the latest information and tips around physical activity and practicing a healthy lifestyle, step into health enables the community to have greater control over their health.

EVENTS

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PRODUCED AND EDITED BY ASPETAR HEALTH PROMOTION RESEARCHER – ASPETAR

Dr. Nektarios Stavrou - Sport Psychologist - Aspetar

FACT OR FICTION?

Children and adolescents should do at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous activity everyday!

Submit your answer to: www.stepintohealth.qa/contactUsPage.aspx

The answer from issue 7: Fact. People should focus on light strength exercise rather than intense aerobic exercise during their fasting. Congratulations to Ali Essa

EVENTS

September - October
Aspire Active Classes

18 October
Aspire Urban Adventure

27 September
Color Life Run

31 October
Aspire Int. 6:50 Race

13 December
Standard Chartered 10K race 2014

THE BENEFITS OF EXERCISE PARTICIPATION ARE WELL RECOGNIZED AND ESTABLISHED. IN THE SAME WAY, DURING THE LAST THIRTY YEARS, THE PSYCHOLOGICAL AND MENTAL BENEFITS OF EXERCISE HAVE BEEN WIDELY INVESTIGATED PROVIDING SUPPORT FOR ITS FACILITATIVE AND POSITIVE ROLE ON WELL-BEING AND QUALITY OF LIFE ACROSS THE LIFESPAN. EXERCISE PARTICIPATION HAS BEEN TRADITIONALLY EXAMINED OVER CHANGES IN AVERSIVE PSYCHOLOGICAL STATES (I.E., ANXIETY, DEPRESSION) AND/OR POSITIVE EMOTIONAL STATES ATTRIBUTED TO REGULAR EXERCISE PARTICIPATION. BOTH TYPES OF RESEARCH HAVE SUPPORTED POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF REGULAR EXERCISE ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH.

In more detail, a positive effect of exercise on reported stress and anxiety in children has been found. In addition to the stress relief, fit children seem to be able to handle stress and anxiety better than the unfit ones. These positive associations have been supported for both boys and girls, with the reduction of mental tension being a constant result.

Depression shows an upward trend in modern societies not only among adults but also in children aged 12 to 17. Regular exercise seems to have a positive effect on depression decline and this result is supported by many physiological and psychological mechanisms. Based on some of the proposed psychological mechanisms, physical activity and exercise distracts and diverts children’s focus away from environmental stressors. In addition to that, exercise provides a sense of mastery, self-discipline and environmental control manifested in other endeavours and increased academic achievement.

Further to the decrease of negative psychological states, regular exercise has a positive influence on emotions linked to self-esteem, self-confidence, and self-worth. When children reach personal goals, they are becoming more competent to face any common environmental challenge. A wide number of studies have also supported a link between physical activity and a positive body-image.

Exercise holds a significant pedagogical value for the development of healthy personality in children. Physical activity is an area that promotes friendship and cooperation among children, as well as important characteristics of personal growth such as persistence, commitment, and motivation. Frequently these psychological characteristics have a positive impact on children's academic performance, as several researchers have supported the link between regular exercise participation and improved cognitive and mental functioning which is directly linked to children’s learning ability. This is attributed to the observation that physically active children have the ability to concentrate effectively during schooling activities, with better memory and quality of sleep acting on the improvement of academic performance. Finally, although limited research has been addressing the effects of physical activity on cognitive and behavioral dysfunctions in children and youth, participation in exercise programs has an overall positive effect in Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), various learning inability disorders and Autism.

As a conclusion, it is important to be mentioned that parents need to help their children to formulate positive physical movement experiences through frequent physical activity and participation in various sport and exercise activities. Most importantly, they need to provide a positive role model for their children through their own frequent participation in a range of physically active hobbies and endeavors.
IS COMPETITIVE SPORT A POSITIVE ACTIVITY FOR CHILDREN?

Amanda Johnson – Lead physiotherapist – Aspire Health Center

THERE IS A DEBATE ON WHETHER CHILDREN SHOULD COMPETE OR JUST HAVE FUN WHEN PLAYING SPORTS. CHILDREN, AS YOUNG AS SIX YEARS OLD, CAN EXPERIENCE A COMPETITIVE ENVIRONMENT IF INVOLVED IN SPORTING ACTIVITIES AT CLUBS AND FEDERATIONS. THE BENEFITS OF SPORTS PARTICIPATION OUTWEIGHT THE NEGATIVES BUT IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE ADULTS INVOLVED TO ENSURE CHILDREN FIND PARTICIPATION AN ENJOYABLE AND CHALLENGING EXPERIENCE RATHER THAN ONE THAT LEADS TO PAIN, INJURY AND DISILLUSIONMENT.

Competitive sport can be character building by increasing self-esteem and reducing anxiety. It teaches children to solve problems, build self-discipline and respect for others. During competition, as there is usually a winner and loser, it teaches them to deal with adversity and how to deal with disappointment, which is a valuable lesson for life in general.

Any competitive situation involving children or adolescents should be in a controlled environment without excessive pressure from parents and coaches. Adults should ensure a strict adherence to the rules to prevent injury with the age-appropriate equipment such as the size of goals, footballs and pitches and the correct footwear.

Growth related problems are not uncommon and are usually the result of an increase in the load of training or competition, particularly during a period of growth but if they are looked after properly there are no long term consequences. If a child complains of any injury; discomfort; or pain, this should be investigated as some injuries can have a detrimental effect on developing tissue and could lead to problems in other parts of the skeleton.

Sleep is a crucial factor for children. Up to the age of 12 years, they need 10-11 hours of sleep every night. There are two types of sleep, sometimes termed “quiet” sleep and “active” sleep. During “quiet” sleep, there is an increased flow of blood to the muscles, hormones are released to ensure growth and development, energy stores are replenished and tissue growth and repair will occur. “Active” sleep is the time during sleep our brains are active and we dream. Both types are required to be fully rested.

Diet and nutrition are the main source of energy for active children, so eating the correct food is vital to maintain good activity levels. Carbohydrates are the main source of energy especially foods such as bread, rice and pasta. Children must stay hydrated when participating in competition or training by drinking plenty of fluids. It has been shown that dehydration can cause a drop in energy levels, heat exhaustion and even heat stroke.

Too much training and competition can cause problems such as mood swings, loss of appetite, sleep disturbance and even injury. But there is overwhelming evidence to show that regular exercise boosts academic achievement and helps concentration in the classroom particularly in teenagers, both boys and girls.

Children can enjoy the competitive environment as long as it is monitored and controlled by parents and coaches and can result in a healthy lifestyle which can be sustained into adulthood.
**PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND CHILDREN**

Hamad Al Kuwari – Physical Educator – ASPETAR

REGULAR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY CAN PRODUCE LONG TERM HEALTH BENEFITS. PEOPLE OF ALL AGES, SHAPES, SIZES, AND ABILITIES CAN BENEFIT FROM BEING PHYSICALLY ACTIVE. THE MORE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY YOU DO, THE GREATER THE HEALTH BENEFITS.

To ensure the role of physical activity and make it a basic system and daily lifestyle of the individual, we must concern ourselves for children and the inclusion of physical activity within their daily schedule must concern us for children and the inclusion of physical activity within their daily schedule to preserve their health and growth properly and make them react in a positive way through the participation in physical activity.

In this era of high-tech electronic devices that are available throughout the day (including video games, Internet and TV shows) many children are becoming more sedentary and getting very little physical exercise. It can be a challenge for parents to pull their children away from it all. Finding ways to motivate children to become more active may take a bit of effort, but it will prove to be an effort well worth your time.

**How to motivate kids to do physical activity and stay away from electronic devices**

- Trying to designate a set time for exercise and sports, such as running, swimming, and playing football
- Participating in physical activities and festivals during school hours
- Reducing the time spent in front of television and other electronic devices to two hours a day
- Having parents engage with children to develop their physical hobbies like bike riding and swimming
- Creating conditions and appropriate places for kids to play and increase their physical activity.

**PHYSICAL INACTIVITY IS ASSOCIATED WITH VARIOUS HEALTH RISKS FOR CHILDREN, SUCH AS:**

- Obesity, high blood pressure, diabetes, osteoporosis and cholesterol
- Introversion and social isolation
- Harmful effects on children’s cognitive function and muscular system

**HEALTHY EATING FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN**

By Mahmood Al Khatib Ph.D - Sport Dietitian - Aspetar

Breakfast is the most important meal for school children. Studies showed that students who skip their breakfast suffer from poor school achievement and low attention. However, more than 1/3 of school children skip their breakfast. Studies found that students who eat breakfast regularly are less susceptible to obesity or diabetes.

Most of the reasons why children skip breakfast are timing and availability of prepared breakfast. Therefore, it is important that children wake up early (by sleeping early), and that breakfast is prepared for them on time, as well as having parents join their children at breakfast to encourage them to eat properly.

Most of the children don’t bring lunch box to school and prefer to buy food from the school cafeteria, which is not a good idea as long as the school provides healthy food choices. However, the lunch box can ensure that the child eats a variety of healthy foods if it contains a balanced meal including items from each food group. An example for a healthy and balanced lunch box would be:

- Chicken / tuna / cheese / egg sandwich, rich in vegetables.
- Milk, flavored milk or fruit juice.
- An apple / banana / orange / grapes / dates...

**TIPS FOR PARENTS TO GUIDE THEIR CHILDREN**

- Start the day with a healthy breakfast.
- Get your kids into food preparation. They usually like what they make.
- Make sure your child is not skipping meals by having 3 main meals and 2 snacks on time.
- Serve vegetables, fruit or yogurt for snacks.
- Offer water and milk instead of soft drinks and other sugary drinks.
- Choose wisely when eating out – avoid meal deals and super-sizing.
- Introduce one new food or a new vegetable each week.
- Limit high-calorie snacks such as candy, chocolate and chips.
- Keep TV and computers out of the bedroom.
- Be sure that they sleep enough hours daily.

**THE AMOUNT OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PARENTS SHOULD ENCOURAGE IN KIDS EACH DAY TO CURB THE TREND IN OBESITY**

- Serve your child 5 fruits and vegetables every day
- Encourage at least 1 hour of physical activity every day
- Limit media time to 2 hours
- Eliminate ALL soda & sugar drinks. Make water your child’s to-go beverage

MAINTAINING A BALANCED DIET AND REGULAR EXERCISE IS IMPORTANT FOR ALL INDIVIDUALS, ESPECIALLY SCHOOL CHILDREN. CHILDREN GROW RAPIDLY AND ARE USUALLY VERY ACTIVE, SO THEY ARE REQUIRED TO CONSUME ADEQUATE ENERGY AND TO EAT A VARIETY OF FOODS FROM EACH FOOD GROUP TO ENSURE OPTIMAL INTAKE OF ALL NUTRIENTS SPECIALLY VITAMINS AND MINERALS. THEREFORE, A BALANCED DIET PROVIDING ADEQUATE ENERGY AND NUTRIENTS IS ESSENTIAL FOR CHILDREN AT THIS STAGE.
**Harraka-wa-Sehha (HWS)** is one of the Healthy Lifestyle Program (HLP)/Aspetar initiatives to promote physical activity and health among children in Qatar. It aims to develop an interactive sport-based health educational program for children.

HWS is one of the afterschool programs for children 10 – 12 years old with 8 weeks phases conducted at Aspire Dome facilities. The 1st phase will be starting on 12th October 2014.

HWS is one hour session, 4 days/week in which children will receive supervised structured health messages while they are playing different sports (football, basketball, handball and volleyball).

Continuous health and fitness assessment is carried out for participating children and follow up will be assured.

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**The aim of namat.qa, healthy lifestyle web-based platform, is to serve as an open national and regional educational platform that promotes healthy lifestyle, creates public awareness in Arabic communities about diseases related to unhealthy lifestyles and how they can be prevented, enhances knowledge about best practice guidelines for physical activity and healthy eating and contributes to a sustained change in positive lifestyle behaviours in Qatar and other Arab societies.**

Namat.qa is delivered in a bilingual web-based platform that provides information about the components of a healthy lifestyle and how to achieve it in order to prevent non-communicable diseases focusing on providing content in Arabic language.

Become part of our family. Please register and join us at www.namat.qa

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もしユーティリティ、治験やアーティストプロトコルが健康生活を促進する目的で進められているプログラムの一部であると、それは子供たちの健康と運動の促進を目的としています。そのプログラムは、10〜12歳の子供たちに対して、土曜日に1時間、4日/週の形式で行われ、8週間の段階で実施されます。第1段階は、2014年10月12日から開始されます。

HWSは、1時間のセッションで、土曜日4日/週の形式で行われ、参加子供たちに対して、運動指導と健康メッセージが提供されます。

継続的な健康管理とフィットネス評価が実施され、参加者に対してフォローアップが保证されます。

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 مشروع حركة وصحة هو أحد مبادرات برنامج أنماط الحياة الصحية بمستشفى سبيتار بغرض تعزيز النشاط البدني والصحة بين الأطفال من خلال فعاليات لمدة شهرين يهدف المشروع إلى تقديم برنامج رياضي حيّ يضمن التثقيف والتوعية الصحية من خلال ممارسة الأطفال للرياضة.

حركة وصحة عبارة عن برنامج رياضي بعد الفم الدراسي للأطفال من سن 10 إلى 12 سنة من الجنسين. ويتكون من أربع حصص تدريبية في الأسبوع لمدة ثمانية أسابيع. ويتضمن التدريب بالتمثيل البدني خلال فترة أسبوعية الحصة التدريبية هي مفتاحها، تتم فيها ممارسة الرياضات المختلفة للفريق، كرة القدم، كرة السلة، كرة الطائرة، والتنقشة الرياضية والكرة الطائرة.

تم التقييم والمتابعة للبرنامج من خلال النشاطي الصحية ومحادثة البيانات للطفل بالإضافة إلى مستوى الوعي الصحي.

للتسجيل في البرنامج يرجى زيارة www.namat.qa أو مراسلتنا عبر healthy.children@namat.qa

For program registration, please visit www.namat.qa

Or contact us on healthy.children@namat.qa